

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 000044

SIPDIS

LONDON FOR POL/RIEDEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: MAOISTS IN NO MOOD FOR COMPROMISE

REFS: A) 01 Kathmandu 2504, B) 01 Kathmandu 2437, C) 01

Kathmandu 2423, D) 01 Kathmandu 2394, E) 01 Kathmandu 2324, F) 01 Kathmandu 2302

1. (S) Summary. In both their words and deeds, Nepal's Maoist insurgents have shown themselves to be unwilling to negotiate, compromise or abandon their armed struggle. They have admitted that they would use negotiations or a cease-fire as an opportunity to regroup for their next offensive. The Maoists have been steadfastly vehement in their condemnation of the Palace, and increasingly critical of the U.S. Events in December quickly proved that a Maoist pledge to cease attacks against certain targets was a hollow feint designed to gain tactical advantage. Some of these efforts are likely intended to defuse mounting international pressure and criticism, including possible inclusion on at least one U.S. terrorism list. In the absence of substantial, sustained military pressure by Government forces, and whether or not they temporarily suspend attacks, the Maoists will continue their campaign of terror and duplicity in pursuit of their strategic aims. End Summary.

No Mood for Compromise

2. (C) The record of public statements by leaders of Nepal's Maoist movement indicates that the insurgents have no interest in compromise or negotiation. Recent pronouncements echo previous remarks, when the Maoists made it clear they would be disinclined, under any circumstances, to give up their armed struggle. Most famously, Maoist ideologue Pushpa Kamal Dahal, who goes by the name "Prachanda," told an interviewer in May, 2001, that the movement's "guiding principles on the question of negotiations are the experiences of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty under Lenin's leadership and the Chongqing negotiations under Mao's leadership." In both cases, the communists used the pretext of engaging in talks to regroup and prepare for an offensive.

3. (SBU) In the same vein, Dahal told the Far Eastern Economic Review in October 2002, that the Maoists would not lay down their arms to come to the negotiating table, and that possibility for resolving the crisis through negotiations would "depend on the level of victory achieved on the battlefield."

Monarchy Has to Go, Maoists Insist

4. (C) A November 2002, article in India's "Economic and Political Weekly" by Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai takes an equally hard-line position. Bhattarai's article divides the Nepali political landscape into three factions: the Palace, the parliamentary parties, and the Maoists. He describes the King's actions in removing the Prime Minister as "retrogressive" and a "putsch," and claims the monarch is disinclined to share power. Bhattarai makes it clear that the Maoists are against the Palace-stating unequivocally that the Maoists will not rest until the monarchy is gone. There is room, however, for a rapprochement with the political parties, who, Bhattarai suggests, may yet have a role in the revolution. [Comment: As Post reported previously, the Maoists may be using the peace process as a means to drive a wedge between the political parties and the Palace (Ref A). End Comment.]

Increasingly, U.S. Focus of Maoist Criticism

5. (SBU) In the same article, Bhattarai singled out the U.S. for criticism on several counts, stating that the U.S. was behind the June 2001 assassination of Nepal's King Birendra, was directly involved in the Palace "coup" of October 2002, and is "in league with India against China." Bhattarai also mentions Ambassador Malinowski by name, and alleges that he has been "lobbying to rationalize the royal coup."

Threats, Couched in Jargon

16. (S) Though couched in thick ideological jargon, Bhattarai's tone is unmistakably threatening, as when he says, "in the coming days revolution and counter-revolution can be logically foreseen to clash with greater intensity and ferocity." And, more frankly, "it is but natural to centralize one's forces for the decisive battle." Using the rhetoric of anachronistic Marxism, he speaks of the "historical necessity" of his movement, and of the "materialist dialectics" that determine the conflict between revolution and counter-revolution. Orthodox Marxism describes three stages of protracted war: strategic defensive, strategic stalemate and strategic offensive. Bhattarai has already claimed that "a situation of strategic stalemate has developed" (Ref D). [Note: Nepal's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) also recently told us that the conflict has reached a "50-50 stalemate" (Ref B). End Note.]

Preparing to Up the Ante

17. (S) In early December, there were signs that the Maoists were feigning a strategic cease-fire. In a December press release (Ref F), Prachanda pledged to cease attacks on non-military infrastructure the cadres of other political parties. Events quickly proved this promise hollow, as the number and ferocity of attacks on such targets continued unabated (Ref E). Evidence exists that the Maoists are preparing to raise the ante even more. A vernacular Nepali-language weekly reported in late November that a group of South Asian extremists, including Nepali Maoists, in early October formed a committee for "World Peoples' Retaliation Agitation" in South Asia (Ref C). [Note: Post has been unable to confirm the veracity of this report, although Indian intelligence officers pooh-poohed the notion that such an alliance would pose a threat. End Note.]

Comment: Intransigence, Belligerence and Revolution

18. (S) Judging both from the Maoists' rhetoric and their behavior, their position will not soften in coming months, and they will seize every opportunity, including negotiations or cease-fires, to gain advantage. Some of the Maoist rhetoric about dialogue seems calculated to influence foreign audiences, including the U.S., in order to discourage putting the Maoists on any terrorist list. We are convinced, furthermore, that the Maoists will not approach peace negotiations in good faith unless and until they come under substantial, sustained pressure from security forces. Faced with an increasing spiral of violence, Nepal's government has had difficulty rooting out the Maoists, and the insurgents' recent statements show them at their most intransigent and belligerent. Framed by the jargon of mid-twentieth-century Marxism, their claim to stand on principle stems both from their attempt to occupy the moral high ground and from textbook guerrilla tactics. As the Maoists have learned from insurgencies elsewhere, to the extent that they can instill chaos, confusion and disorder, they will gain the upper hand. We expect the Maoists to continue to pursue their strategic aims with single-minded determination, employing terror and duplicity as their tactics.

MALINOWSKI